

UNITY.

FREEDOM, + FELLOWSHIP + AND + CHARACTER + IN + RELIGION.

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UNITY.

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NOTES.

The *Union Signal* speaks with enthusiasm of the "blessed influences" proceeding from the Congress of Women, but is strangely reticent in regard to the Roman Punch which the Congress paraded on the menu of its banquet.

The secretary's duties badly crowd the editor who sits in the same chair, in this issue. UNITY will go to press this time with the editor in Nebraska, conscious of the fact that our readers will miss the interesting accounts of the Michigan Conference, and the Mt. Pleasant Dedication, the Buda Conference, the ordination of James H. West, the Chicago Women's Association that met at All Souls church, and the first meeting of the season of the Channing Club at which the members indulged in "Recollections of early Unitarianism in Chicago." Among other good things was a letter from Robert Collyer. The editor will hurry back to make good the promise now recorded, of serving all these up in our next.

We quote the following from a Chicago exchange as carrying with it a suggestion to some of our own friends:

Our fund for sending the *Advance* to Home Missionaries is exhausted, and overdrawn to the amount of nearly one hundred and fifty dollars, and here is a specimen of the letters which we are receiving:

"In behalf of my husband and for myself I wish to thank you for the *Advance* which we have now received gratuitously for a year. We hoped by this time to be able to pay our subscription. But, as you know, the crops are almost an entire failure here, this season, and we are without means to pay for it. I leave it for you to decide whether we are worthy to receive it longer from your fund for that purpose." Who will help to serve the *Advance* to our missionaries for the next year? There are at least three hundred in the home and foreign fields who should be thus aided.

We congratulate our neighbor on having such a fund as is here mentioned, even though it be occasionally overdrawn. UNITY is constantly in receipt of applications for free copies from parties who ought to have them, but we are reduced to the alternative of denying the request or granting it at our own expense.

Edgar L. Wakeman, heretofore connected with the Chicago office of the *Courier-Journal* of Louisville, is about to launch out on a journalistic venture of great expectation, in this city. On Christmas day, the first number of the *Current*, a weekly, literary journal is to appear. The announcement before us includes an international array of great names, reaching from Emile Zola to Canon Farrar abroad, and from E. P. Roe to John Burroughs in this country. Adequate financial backing is spoken of and the confidence common to the initiation of such a project is strongly expressed. Whether a journal of high ability and noble aims can be made to spring Minerva-like fully armed out of the brain of our Western Jove, is to our mind a matter of serious doubt, but that some day such a journal will be realized, we have not the slightest doubt. Mr. Wakeman's ambition is a laudable one. If he succeeds the Present will applaud; if he fails the Future will kindly record his venture as one of the necessary steps leading to the ultimate triumph. We wish the *Current* all success.

The *Sower*, of October the 20th, quietly and peacefully laid down and died. The editors, with a calm and steady hand, inscribed on the tombstone

—one of those baby headstones which crowd the vast cemetery of newspapers—"Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord." We sincerely regret the death of our younger brother and heartily repeat the words "It has not lived in vain." It has successfully lived the round of the one year it started out for. It must have done much to foster a common life among the Unitarian churches of Philadelphia and vicinity. It has greatly multiplied the number of those who have been benefited by the utterances of the Philadelphia pulpit, and is it not fair to say that it adds one more demonstration of the costliness and the ultimate hopelessness of local religious papers? A "parish paper" is an expensive luxury, that sooner or later must be abandoned. Is it not wiser to concentrate the interest and resources of our parishes upon those papers that have the possibility, at least, of representing a broad domain, geographically and spiritually. Only those papers who occupy metropolitan centers can hope eventually to represent cosmopolitan interests. Nevertheless we wish to bear cordial testimony to the great good done by the humblest paper missionary. The Unitarian minister by nature has a great appetite for printer's ink, and each one sooner or later will be tempted to try his hand at making a paper. To this appetite the cause is indebted for some of its most aggressive and constructive impulses, but the preacher's pocketbook generally collapses under this inspiration. We speak sympathetically, for we know how it is.

The preacher at Central Music Hall has recently been saying some good things about the ideal young man, in a discourse based on a text from Ecclesiastes—"Rejoice, O young man, in your strength." The present ideal of young manhood outruns in grace and moral beauty that offered for inspection in either the writings of Homer or Solomon, though the modern young man himself is "not always an advance" on his predecessors. The vice that "attacks at one time the money, the body and the brain of its victim," is the source of its greatest misery and temptation. Drunkenness is the master evil of the times. The Professor then proceeds to sketch that form of young man which the age is constructing "out of all the material willed to it by the past and discovered in the present," finding for the production of this type "rich and beautiful material gathered into one time and place," the time being the present, the place, America. The young man of our day is Greek in his

reviving love of athletic sports and muscular training, and in some instances is in danger of becoming too Greek, when carried away with a love of bodily exercise which "robs the brain of blood that it may build up the arms and limbs." The present age demands mental soundness as well as physical vigor from its young men, and in making this demand for a true partnership of body and mind, "asks the youth of its care to fling away the vices of the past." The modern young man is slowly learning the meaning of the word home. The life of the club and hotel are beginning to pall upon his taste, and "the voice of the best and wisest and happiest is sounding in favor of that dear old home which made England, and helped make the moral power of our land." The ideal young man is also destined to be religious, since "atheism is not a logical system," and can never command the assent of the majority. He will be religious, but not a follower of Calvin, Wesley or M. Capel; rather a practical Christian, a professor of that form of Christianity which has fled from philosophy and become a pursuit of human happiness." In spite of all the vices and follies of society, and the unripe spirit of the times, specimens here and there of the ideal young man are to be found. Even in a hardened city like Chicago there are "hundreds of young men who have reached manhood without having stained their souls with the common forms of vice," who in the future will reap the reward of "the best success, the serenest mind and the most hopeful heart." The gift of happiness is too "delicate and divine" to be bestowed on any but the most worthy.

THE WOMAN'S CONGRESS.

The most notable event that has taken place in this city since our last issue, has been the eleventh meeting of the "American Association for the Advancement of Women." This body has just held a three days' session beginning October 17th. The afternoon and evening meetings were held at Hershey Hall and were open to the public of both sexes. The forenoon sessions were of an executive character and the Congress sat with closed doors in one of the parlors of the Palmer House. The gathering was in many respects a remarkable one, and in every way one of great significance and suggestiveness. A large number of delegates, representing the remotest parts of this country, were in attendance. The papers and discussions showed a

wide range of interest and a high average of intelligence on many questions. No one giving sympathetic attention to the matter in hand and to the manner in which it was handled, could fail to see that there was a place for such a congress; and that, if these women are true to their opportunities, it lies within their power to do much towards moulding public opinion and shaping public action. Comparisons are odious and unnecessary, but in directness, dignity and moral earnestness, the Woman's Congress compares favorably with any similar organization that we know. We expect much from these women. Indeed, it seems to us that theirs is an opportunity infinitely higher than they themselves realize, and the age demands at their hands an impulse which, for all their excellence, they are not yet moved to give. Did we respect this body less, we would be content like most of our associates of the press to dismiss the Congress with some well-tuned complimentary sentences, expecting to do them justice by patronizing them with some gallant phrases. We believe that the women are too sensible to be content with such conventional charity. They have a right to insist that their work be estimated not as "Woman's Work," but, as Mrs. Browning would say, as "Work." Such activities as are represented by this Congress are in need of nothing, in these days, so much as just criticism. So, out of our great respect for the cause they stand for, and high estate of those who stand for it, we are constrained to speak of some serious disappointments and obvious defects in the meetings of this Congress.

The Congress to our mind was wanting in the prophetic elements. There were not enough women *burdened* with a message, *inspired* to speak. The spirit of it was essentially Greek rather than Semitic, seeking the beautiful rather than righteousness. It affected culture at the cost of an enthusiasm for reform. We fear that the proprieties and conventionalities of "Society" tyrannized unconsciously over this body of women as much, but no more, than they would over the same number of men. We fear there was the same disposition to be seen and heard, the same ability to pull wires, to caucus and manipulate in the interests of self and notoriety, as does shamefully characterize the political gatherings of men. There was an over-estimate of words, and an under-estimate of the personality back of the words; this was particularly manifested in the debilitating habit of the Congress of offering

papers written by one party and read by another; as if the personality of the speaker in such gatherings as this, is not by far the most essential part of her thought. It was a confession of weakness on the part of the Congress unworthy the women that composed it.

We know well the difficulties of making a programme for such a gathering that can be carried out, and certain disappointments are inevitable. But a programme published ought to be regarded as a solemn contract with the public, not to be entered into lightly; and when the inevitable disappointment occurs, the best amends to be made to the public, is not to offer the expected paper through the unexpected voice, which means accepting both the writer and the speaker at their *minimum*, but to substitute another speaker who is able to give of herself. There were women enough at this gathering to have made a vital programme out of their own material, and thus have avoided the depressing influence of having, we believe, nearly half the papers offered by non-attendants through the sometimes painfully inadequate readings of others. With frequent striking exceptions, it seemed to us that these women were working at arm's length. The things nearest them to do, to help and reform were not the things most handled. The "Woman in Politics," the "Woman in Journalism," etc., etc., were treated and glorified. This is well, but not well to the exclusion of the Woman in the Kitchen, the Nursery, the Dining-room, the Study and the Sick-chamber.

It was an unfortunate expression in the welcoming poem at the banquet that spoke of these women as "*constellating*." Let the women "*constellate*" less, and simply come together as ordinary mortals in the interests of simple tastes, modest bearing, high duty and earnest work. After all, the greatest thralldom of woman to-day is not political but conventional. Fashion and style are greater tyrants than men, and the right to dress according to the dictates of economy and taste, without the sacrifice of self-respect and social standing, is farther removed from womankind in America to-day than is the right of suffrage. This last right she must and will receive, but it will not bring to her the former. Many a woman who cannot afford a subscription to the *Woman's Journal*, and has not money to buy five dollars' worth of new books a year, is compelled to pay twenty dollars a year for head gear. (We take a woman's estimate.)

It was well to hang the prophetic face of Emerson above the platform at Hershey Hall. It was a beautiful thought that placed in the foreground of the platform a graceful column bearing a beautiful cast of the Venus di Milo, so graciously clothed in her nudity, with purity and unconscious dignity; but we disliked the fussiness and the elaborateness of the rostrum that aped the confusion of the rich man's home, which is a cross between a Japanese curio and a down-town furniture store window. We enjoyed exceedingly the social privileges of the hospitable and most proper banquet at the Palmer House, where nearly four hundred men and women sat down together as the guests of the "Chicago Women's Club," an occasion that did credit to both guests and host. But we disliked the awful mannerisms of the woman who *elocutes* such speech-making as was secured by the pumping of phrases that were not heard, and the aroma of rotten rum in the ices, just as much as we have disliked these things, so often in the banquets of men. These are just as pardonable in women as they are in men. It is because we so profoundly believe that women are yet to teach the men the ways of sense, economy and purity, in public as well as in private life that we venture this brotherly criticism. We liked the oft-uttered breadth of the Congress that recognized the fact that to help womankind is to help mankind. Men need the leading that they will accept from women as from no other sources; for

"There is a vision in the heart of each
Of justice, mercy, wisdom; tenderness
To wrong and pain, and knowledge of its cure—
And these, embodied in a woman's form
That best transmits them, pure as first received
From God above her, to mankind below."

From this fact let woman derive her power to govern.

THE MYTHOLOGY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

"The Bible is a pasture and not a pound."—*Bartol.* "Christianity, like any other religion, has its mythology."—*Hedge.*

About a year ago an interesting and practical discussion appeared in the *Christian Register* concerning the use we make, or ought to make, of the stories of the birth and infancy of Jesus.

To all except those committed to the doctrine of the plenary inspiration and infallible accuracy of the Scriptures—a doctrine which has become a poor raveling rag of belief—there is some admission, tacit or open, of the mythological element in the records of the New Testament. This admission exists in various forms. With some it may have

gone little if any farther than generally to regard some parts of the history as more certain or authoritative than others. With some there is a clearer demarcation. What is directly taught and enforced, as, for example, the words and precepts ascribed to Jesus, would to their minds permit of no question, while narratives of events, casual remarks of the author and so on might leave room for a possible doubt of their complete accuracy or authority. Again, we shall find those who openly discredit whole passages and transactions as irrational or unworthy. While different methods of "explaining away" their objectionable features are offered, they settle the matter by an out-and-out rejection. One regards the blasting of the barren fig-tree by the word of Jesus and in the way it was done as a petty, senseless act; therefore not attributable to Jesus. The destruction of the swine, by sending into them the devils cast out of an insane man, beside its intrinsic improbability, was an unjustifiable ruin of another's property. The violent attack upon the traders in the temple with ropes' ends, and the order by Peter to get some swords for defense, were inconsistent with the gentle character of Jesus and his repeated injunction of non-resistance. The story of the Transfiguration, where Jesus is seen in company with Moses and Elias; the Temptation of the Wilderness, in which Satan is represented as a real person—these of course some will say are not to be taken literally; they are poetic or allegorical narratives. It is abstract truth dressed in personal or material garb; as clearly so as in the poems of Emerson. But all this we class under the term mythology,—a variation from literal accuracy, the adoption of bold, material, metaphorical language in the setting forth of ideas and events. Sometimes it may be done unconsciously as in legends, or consciously as in parables and fables. And whoever makes the admissions alluded to or those like them, in regard to the accounts and statements of the New Testament, so far recognizes the mythological elements of that book.

Some go much further than the instances cited. It is not here and there a verse or story by some chance interpolated or distorted, but a large part of the narratives are looked upon as figurative or imaginary—chiefly written long after the age of Jesus, and by unknown authors who simply gathered up from floating rumors all that could be got for the interest and edification of the infant church.

It is probably not an over-statement to say that, in common with the vast majority of the scientific

world, all the newer school of religious thinkers and preachers, whether in our own or in other communions, have pretty much ceased to believe in the *miracles* of the New Testament as actual events. All those stories of supernatural effort or intervention are remanded to the realm of imaginary creation. For thinking men they must constitute a body of mythology pure and simple, in the Christian religion—just as really as there was a body of mythology in the Greek religion, as it in fact belongs to all religions.

And now comes the practical question. Recognizing this state of things to exist; knowing also that there is still a large body of persons in almost every church, certainly in every community, who are doing their best to believe in the literal truth of all that is to be found between the lids of the Bible, what use shall we make, in churches, and to our children, of those portions of the Scripture, whether of the Old Testament or of the New Testament, which no longer stand in our minds for the truth once generally and easily enough accepted.

In the discussion to which I have referred, Mr. Wendte of Newport may be considered as the first party, who has published a Christmas service for the use of Sunday-schools, in which is ingeniously interwoven all the stories of the birth and infancy of Jesus, and the old carols, that through so many generations have sung the advent of the Son of God. Mr. Chadwick of Brooklyn may be regarded as the second party, who has a Christmas service too, and a joyous one; but it is divested of all this celestial and supernatural scenery. It is the birth of the natural babe Jesus which is celebrated, it is the infancy of a human child that is presented, fulfilling finally such a wonderful hope and promise. And he says "I wish to express my astonishment at the way my friends Wendte, Gannett and others go on, year after year, unsinging what they preach. An ancient saying runs: 'Let me write the songs of a people, and I do not care who writes its laws.' And I would say, let me write the songs of a Sunday-school, and I do not care who writes its Sunday-school papers or preaches its Sunday-school sermons. If it is worth while to teach in talk and lesson that Jesus was not born in Bethlehem, nor in a manger, and that the wise men of the East are mythical, so too the choiring angels, and the guiding star. I cannot see why it is not worth while to abstain from putting these things into service and song and then putting the service and song to the children's mouths, and so, by consequence, into their hearts

and brains. As metaphor, a sparing, very sparing use of these things is possibly desirable."

The third party in this conference is Mr. Gannett, lately of St. Paul. He uses the legends and uses the carols. But he frankly says that it is not a question of truth, but of interest and taste—not of doctrine but of poetry. "Our Christmas service this year was printed in two parts: (1) 'The Christmas Poem'—containing the old carols; (2) 'The Christmas Fact.' Again, this last autumn, we spent five or six Sundays on lessons over this same Christmas poem, tracing it from our gospels into apocryphal gospels, finding its analogues in other religions, going to the 'holy places' it had made, looking at some of the pictures it had painted, watching the miracle plays where it began the modern drama, glancing at some of the other festivals of the winter solstice and then at some of the great Christian dogmas and rituals it—this same Christmas poem—has helped to shape, ending with a little study of the Christmas fact. Altogether I think most of the children must have been impressed with the wonderful part which imagination has played in the history of religion, and got thereby a key, which they will keep in their memory-pockets, to some religious problems of their after thought. And we did this by enjoying, not strangling, those baby-stories. So when Christmas came round, it seemed all right and pleasant to sing 'We Three Kings of Orient are,' and 'As I Kept Watch Beside my Sheep,' and the rest. * * If any little tots, as I think quite likely, still believed in the three kings, and angel-song, their turn will soon come to lift off the crowns and understand the songs. It isn't any two or three songs, but the general emphasis, which establishes creeds; and it is sympathy *with* frankness and frankness *with* sympathy which establishes the spirit and point of view which we most want in our children, and which is more important than any creed."

- It will be seen that these three men occupy as many distinct positions with regard to those parts of the Bible which, written in the form of history, have ceased to be accepted as historical truth. They all agree substantially as to the nature and origin of the records. They have alike ceased to believe in "miracles" or in any form of infallible inspiration. They are all recognized among us as men of a deep and sincere religious spirit—all richly endowed with the poetic temperament, if not poetic genius. Mr. Wendte says the whole account of the nativity and childhood of Jesus "is not sober fact and history, it is not doctrine, and never was intended as such

by its writers. It is an allegory, a poem, and should be read and used as such. As a poem it has been the inspiration of art and song for centuries, has imparted a gentler, tenderer aspect to the history of Christianity, has enriched the worship of the church, glorified the home, and made childhood forever dear and sacred in our eyes. No stories appeal so powerfully to the devout imagination, the worshipful heart of the child: none so revive the childhood in us." Holding this view, he employs them freely without note or comment. Mr. Gannett would use them—not less does he see their beauty and worth—but he would prepare the way for them by explanations; he would have their real character clearly understood, and would be no party to their possible doctrinal or historical misapprehension. Mr. Chadwick would ignore them altogether for popular use; beautiful as they are as myths, the time has not yet fully come when they can be read or sung, without the inference being made that we endorse them in a sense which is false to our real thought. And he asks, with at least some degree of pertinence, what fault we have to find with those who still use theological phrases out of which the old meanings have all evaporated, or who sign creeds which are no longer believed, when by the place we give these New Testament stories, it would be supposed that we accept them as literally true?

J. C. L.

Contributed Articles.

MADONNA DI SAN SISTO.

E. E. M.

Madonna, as the blessed Queen of Heaven,
Thou com'st, a glorious vision, to our sight;
To thee and to the Holy Child is given
The homage due Our Lord, the Lord of Light.
Angelic hosts attend thee from above,
St. Sixtus prays with faith's enraptured glow,
While dear St. Barbara with a smile of love
Declares thy mercy to the world below.

O, Holy Mother, in those wondrous eyes
Are pure revealings of our highest good;
The sacred bond between us naught denies
—Incarnate mystery of motherhood!
We feel our common lives akin to thine,
And see in every child the Babe divine.

Unity Club, Chicago, March 7, 1883.

A CONVERSATION.

J. VILA BLAKE.

Amid a throng of merry people
An aged dame sat quietly,
Alone, looking, not looked upon,
Glad in their festival, and drinking
Her sober glass spiced with their glee.
I, seeing not the royalty
Which God hath crowned when he leads age
Into the court of company,
Passed by that gentle majesty,
To youth and beauty. But soon chided,
I saw her eye whose eye I sought,
And heard her voice whose voice I loved,
Turn toward the dame with reverence.
"Go there! Pay court where it is due,"
She said, "and not to me. There sits
Station august; go talk to her."

Gently admonished, I drew near
That meek sublimity, and spoke:—
"Lady," said I, "by right divine
Queen of this noisy throng, may I
Pay homage due from youth, and hear
Thy wisdom?" "Nay," she said, "the body
Of stiffening age shall drink with thanks
The new wine of thy youth." "Nay, nay,"
I answered, "but thou wilt give me
Stored wealth." "No," said she, "I will draw
From thee life to enjoy my wealth."
"Why, then," I said, "I will stay here
Not as a suitor, for himself
Seeking advantage, paying homage
To a mere ruler: but at home
In thy mild realm, giving free service."

Then, knowing her lone life, I asked,
"Where is thy charge and whilom playmate,
That winsome child whom I have seen
Alternate following thee and followed?
I have not drunk his smile of late.
Often I met him at the school
Where thou wast waiting, serving him
With holy deference of knowledge
To tender ignorance; and often
I saw thee guiding him to church,
As if in his sweet company
To draw near heaven—'tis made of such.
By thee, within the holy walls,
He sat, or on thy lap slept childlike;
For preachers yet preach not to children.
And at thy house his games have filled
My ears with innocence; I marked him
Float in swift curves well-nigh the ceiling
In his light swing, and laugh, not fearing;
Thy daughter's child. Where is he now?"

Smiling, she answered me, the heart
Meanwhile, still young, so strongly sending
Through stiffening cords its tide, they trembled,
And the voice shook:

"Thou wilt remember,
Hardly twelve months ago the child's
Dear mother-flesh, cast by the spirit,
Was borne from church to mingle with
The earth that fed it. And the father
Was twice bereaved, since I the child kept
In whom they, being two, grew one.
But soon the father took the child,
To keep in sight that rare alloy
Wherein he and the mother mingled
Defy the analysis of death."

"And so," I said, "he took the boy—
'Twas natural—and left thee lone.
Dost find the day too sad, too long,
Now that no child's small troubles call thee
To help or heal? Belike time weighs
Upon thy heart too heavily."

"Not so," she said, "for I find duties
To make day busy and night sleepy;
And time I wield like a gold sceptre
By which I keep my realm in order.
I have a son, a manly lad,
Who early goes to work each morn.
He comes not home the live-long day,
But night brings him again, a star
That rises on me in all weathers.
Right early, and, in winter months,
Long before light, I must rise up
To get his breakfast,—pleasant work!
'Tis sweet to see him eat my food
With the keen zest of health and toil!
Soon he is gone, the table cleared,
The stove left comely, shining ranks
Of glass and metal on the shelf
Disposed, utensils bright and useful.
Then leisure comes, filled with new pleasures.
Another lad, a traveller,
I have, who visits all the climes
Of this vast land, from sea to sea,
And with his own eyes looks on nature,
Not taking tales from other men.
Up towering mountain peaks he goes,
And down in dark mines, over plains,
On inland seas. He treads wild forests,
Sleeps on the moss and drinks from brooks.
In his canoe, mid fertile fields,
He goes up rivers to their springs,
Or floats in canyons where a torrent
Hurled from a height has hewn a course
From flinty rock, for ages cutting,
Till the cleft stone precipitous
Towers up a mile above the bed.
He sees strange creatures, men more strange.
Cities magnificent he visits,
Where laws are made and streams of trade
Together rush, a roaring maelstrom.
And from his journeys I have letters,
And boxes of strange things he sends me,
And books of notes and strange adventure,
Thick tomes in which I read untiring.

He says the monstrous sea-board city,
Begirt with floods both salt and fresh,
The ocean and the watery hills
Embracing it like rival lovers,
Is a great continent itself,
Where all the peoples of the earth
Are gathered and all tongues are spoken.

Then comes my hour of exercise.
Tracking in thought my traveller's feet
Beguiles me not of my own walk
Which health requires, of mind and body.
And I wot well that I go forth
In paths familiar girt with wonders
As great as those my traveller sees.
Under the sky I walk with awe;
Sunbeams broidered with shadows deck me;
The birds and far halloos of children,
Voices of men and tread of feet,
The cries of beasts, and watery hush
Of dew-tipped leaves, I hear, rejoicing;
And my heart sings and offers thanks
In summer's leafy tabernacles
Or gothic frames of trees in winter.
Kind greetings meet me—privilege
Of age long living in one place.
I visit marts of garden products,
For rosy fruit to deck the meal
At evening of my dear good lad;
For he from work comes hungry home.
I purchase webs of snowy cloth
To make him clothes or deck his bed.
Belike I buy some silk or linen
Against the Sunday, when afresh
And sprucely he shall dress, and rest.
These errands done of love or pleasure,
Homeward I turn; but pause, reluctant,
Lingering to breathe again my joy
For all the sweet day's blessedness.

Then do I eat, with thanks, at mid-day,
Frugal and lone, my slight repast.
Then up and down my house I go,
Setting it all in comely order,
Renewing the night-ravaged rooms.
The well aired beds are made, and downy
Pillows up-piled, like drifts of snow.
Fresh water sparkles in the ewers,
Fresh towels drape the rack, and air
Is fresh and crisp in every cranny.
The broom, a tool invincible,
Renews the floor. A pure aroma
Of cleanliness pervades the place.
This odor of fresh garniture,
Also a sweet fatigue, awhile
Lull me to sleep. And so my days pass."

The dame ceased, but I answered not,
Thinking how simple was this life,
How fresh and sweet, how tranquil, simple:
Like to the house that held it, daily
Renewed. I thought how well they do,
What gentle ministers are they,
Who, knowing naught of Nature's secret

Save to adore it, naught of learning,
 Yet fill our days with wholesomeness,
 Our nights with uninfected sleep,
 And purify our lives and dwellings,
 Washed, weeded, winnowed, ventilated.
 O homely arts of unstained thrift,
 Instincts of souls immaculate
 Which, from their own unsullied stream,
 Our bodies' dwellings clarify,
 Let none despise you, lowly sources
 Of sweetness, privacy and health!
 And ye that practice these, unfailing,
 In lowliness of place or duty,
 Naught knowing but your simple lot,
 Or suffering pangs of higher dreams,—
 Ye shall be blest, in heaven rewarded,
 Where spotless usefulness is crowned.

Then, with new reverence: "Surely," said I,
 "Thy life is lonely since the child
 Went to his father; art not lonely?"

"Lonely?" she said; "Can one be lonely
 In the audience-room of life? I open
 My window wide and life engulfs me,
 Befriends me with companionship
 And consolation. But lest this
 Seem too remote to satisfy
 The heart that languishes alone,
 Know that I cherish in my house
 Two kinds of living things. My plants
 I tend with love. I wash their leaves,
 And prune them to grow not ungainly;
 And with the soil mix food and drink,
 That they grow not athirst nor languish.
 I know their names and characters.
 Their constancy is beautiful,
 Always the same to those that guard them.
 Blooming, their colors seem rays broken
 From æther, sunsets, clouds and stars.
 Their scent is air from Paradise,
 Sealed in the bud, freed when it opens.
 Also I have my birds, now five,
 But lately six; for yesterday
 I sold one, grieve, and wish I had not.
 They picked the shell within the cage,
 And blithe they are, content and happy,
 Knowing no other life; ay, sooth,
 Favored; for birds toil hard to live,
 Hunting their food; and many a robin
 In sight of a canary's cage
 Has starved to death, hearing his song.
 At early morn I give them food
 And drink, the while I talk to them.
 Then I provide them brimming bowls
 In which they bathe them merrily,
 And smooth their plumage with pink bills,
 Nodding their saucy heads with pleasure.
 I hang their cages, cleansed, in sunbeams,
 Shaded if fervent. Then their songs
 They pour, throats full and beaks upraised,
 In answering strains, or all together—

Sweet music of a tropic isle
 Caught from the clang of shells and pebbles
 On coasts where breaking waves roll back:
 But known to me; I know their notes,
 And hail them like familiar words.
 These are my company before
 My lad comes home. I am not lonely."

"But is not work," I asked "unaided,
 A burden?"

"Surely not," she answered.
 "But one thing at a time I do,
 And all things slowly. No, I tire not.
 I have full strength. My heart is songful,
 Although my withered voice sings not.
 My share of sorrow I have had,
 Loss, pain, and unrequited toil;
 But all is past, and where the flame burned
 Spring up our Lord's new shoots of goodness."

A duty called. I made my reverence.
 The venerable lady answered,
 "Thanks, sir, for sitting down beside me;
 You have conferred a pleasure on me."
 Amazed, humbled, I turned away,
 Glad to hide shame, shame sore yet welcome.
 Could this be royal? this mien lowly,
 The royal sovereignty of age?
 Ay! throned! The last shall be the first.
 And giddy throngs of those now first
 Must be the last, with gentleness
 Before they shall be crowned. Thanked?—
 For what I had not grace myself
 To purpose, blinded to God's glory?
 O let me not walk in his splendors,
 Splendors of innocence in babes,
 Of joy, woe, pathos, in mid-life,
 And of the majesty of age—
 Blind, senseless, like a clod or stone,
 Or with my eyes prone earthward, brute-like,
 Peering for prey to feed ambition.
 But let me know the things God makes,
 And worship what he sets on high.
 O let me feel the pang, the woe,
 The shame, that any other knows;
 And know the praise, the honor, glory,
 Of lowly hearts living beside me.

Blest be thou, venerable dame!
 Thy house is heaven's ante-chamber,
 With voices filled from inner halls,
 Sweet converse to invite thy heart;
 Till thou lay down thy simple life
 And give thy soul to God with peace.

LORD, we have wandered forth through doubt and sorrow,
 And Thou hast made each unknown step an onward one;
 And we will ever trust each unknown morrow
 Thou wilt sustain us, till its work is done.

—Samuel Johnson.

STORIES FROM BROWNING—VII.

ALBERT WALKLEY.

"CHILDE ROLAND TO THE DARK TOWER CAME."*

I had just been knighted and was of the "Order of Helpers of Mankind." It was our purpose to help the suffering, to dry the world's tears; in a word to do away with evil. Our work was not to question, Whence, or why is there Evil? but knowing it to be here our duty was to help remove it. It was the Dark Tower in which dwelt the giants, Sorrow, Pain and Death. These giants reigned over the whole land round about. And their rule was so severe and exacting that the country was one of desolation and ruin.

Filled with a longing to do something, rather than with any hope or pride that I could do much, I took the road to this Dark Tower. And first I met a hoary cripple with malicious eye. His name was Doubling-Do-Nothing. Some called him Fold-your-arms Pessimism. He plainly said, "Fools take this road. Wise men let the world remain as it is, and give themselves no trouble about its sorrows. All who take this way perish, or at least they never return. It is the very road for a foolish and enthusiastic young knight to take." I felt, at first, he lied in every word. And so I went on in the way he pointed.

What ruin, desolation, and penury were about me! The land was a starved, ignoble land—no flowers were there,—not even fresh thistles or burrs—but a destructful cockle and poisonous spurge. For if a thistle-stalk rose above its fellows its head was chopped off, or if the dock's leaf was green, jealous Nature filled it with holes and made it wither. What a world has Evil made of ours; its joys even are withered or poisonous plants. Some power, somehow, when joy lifts its head, cuts it off with a sorrow. This is the land of the three giants. The laborers in this country were like a stiff, blind horse, his every bone astare—a stupid creature, thrust out of the devil's stable. Those burden-bearers must have been wicked to deserve such pain. They might as well be dead as alive—indeed they were almost dead—dead at least to anything worth living for.

Through this land there ran a little river; no sluggish stream congenial to the glooms, but a petty and spiteful current. All along its bank were low, scrubby alders, and willows which hung over into the fast-flowing water, and were broken off and carried down the stream. I knew not but that this river, as it frothed by, was a bath in which some fiend cooled his red-hot hoof. That black stream I crossed, and feared I might rest my foot upon some dead man's cheek. And the name of this river is Human-Tears, into which the sorrows fall, and are borne down to the great ocean of

Forgetfulness. And some, whose meat and drink had been tears, have been lost in this river. But worse than this, I saw a senseless struggle. It was as fierce as if wild-cats were fighting in a red-hot cage. Madly and blindly did the men of this land struggle—their brains had been set to work by a mad brewage—stuff from a poisoned tank had made their blood run red-hot through their veins. There seemed little help for these, so completely were they in the power of the Lords of the Dark Tower. Alcohol, one who held rule under the giants, was master of these men, and kept them close in his inclosure. And then I saw the factories of this land, the air so close, the work so monotonous, the weary hours so long that I thought them wheels on which to break men, or harrows by which to rake all joy out of life.

It was indeed a barren land, with its one spiteful river, with its fierce struggles and its burdens. But I had not seen all yet. For here and there over the land were rankling blotches, and patches like boils. And strange to say, now and then was an oak, which the weight of its branches had cleft—a palsied thing. So have I seen men—whose weight of years had broken the life within and left them palsied oaks—while about them were their fellows suffering the diseases to which men are heirs. Thus while the burdens are great, while the sorrows are many, and the appetites strong, the body itself is diseased. How hard upon the inhabitants are the Lords of the Dark Tower!

This, then, is all? Not so. And while I waited a great black bird—a bosom friend of Death—touched me. And then I saw. Mountains were all about. How came they there? I knew not. Only this, I was no longer a spectator, but an actor—an inhabitant of the land. It was dusk, but not so dark that I could not see. This must be the Valley of the Shadow of Death, I thought. And I was right. All around me were the mountains, and from this valley there was no escape. In its center was the Dark Tower.

And before this Tower I stood face to face with the world's evil. About me were my peers who had been lost in their adventures. My enemies, too, were not few—they, too, were about me—and they looked upon me as game at bay.

At that moment I set my horn to my lips and blew. I made it sound with defiance to my enemies, and with a cry for help to my Lord. For I felt that in this struggle I was in need of divine help, and I was determined that should I perish my King should find me with my face towards the enemy, and in my hand the sword with which I was knighted and bade do my duty. With the sound of my horn came courage and faith that in the fuller light all would appear right. Courage, brethren, courage!

NOTE.—For this interpretation I am without the least particle of authority. It is wholly my own idea of the poem, and may be entirely wrong. What I say, if not in the poem, can be read into it. A. W.

*See Edgar's Song in "King Lear."

TEN GREAT RELIGIONS.*

J. C. LEARNED.

This is an interesting book, as all books from Dr. Clark are. He has the power of popularizing great subjects. He has rendered long and varied service in the field of religious thought. He has been a mediator between old and new. Many men and women in this generation will gladly confess the debt they owe him for help and cheer and stimulating suggestion. A varied reading, and versatility of power and illustration go into all his work, and he stands for large and liberal views. Let any one compare this account with information given to the preceding generation, to see how far we have come. This book, however, does not seem to us to be equal, either in style or substance, to the preceding one of the same title. There are parts which seem loose, hasty and unfinished—a gathering in of various odds and ends from the note-book, cemented together here and there with a little off-hand preaching. The feeling soon gets possession of the careful reader, that the scholarship, though varied, is not profound. Often, when we are very much in want of a little thorough treatment of a subject, we get a neat assertion, an aphorism, or a paradox, of which Dr. Clarke is fond. Still it is to be remembered that the present work is "based" on a course of Lowell Institute lectures in which minute learning would have been out of place, and in which condensed statements would have great value to the listener.

Those who are familiar with his previous writings will remember that of the ten great religions *nine* are called ethnic and *one* (Christianity) catholic. The office of the ethnic religions was, in a general way, to prepare the way for Christianity—as the lower orders of animals prepared the way for man. But in this volume there is an advance. He says: "Of the ten principal religions of the world, *five* are ethnic and *five* catholic. The religions of Egypt, Greece, Hindoostan, Rome and Scandinavia are ethnic; those of Moses, Buddha, Zoroaster, Mohammed and Jesus are catholic. It will be noticed that this enumeration leaves out China or Confucius altogether. But no doubt the Chinese must be ranked among the catholic religions, for he adds that "the ethnic religions all grew up without any prophet as their founder; the catholic were each founded by a prophet." Again, the ethnic religions were polytheisms, while the catholic, coming through one inspired soul, teach, or tend to teach the unity of God. And a still more important distinction is that in the ethnic faiths, religion "is divorced from morality." In Greece, for example, "there is no evidence that the gods required or expected righteousness and mercy from their votaries." The religion of Rome "concerned itself very slightly with the virtues of private life." To be sure there were "exceptional moral merits" in

the Egyptian religion—probably because originally it was revealed or monotheistic; but this morality was altogether transferred to the future life. Moses rejected this view. "Reward and punishment in this world—not in the next—is the doctrine of the Old Testament."

Dr. Clarke gives considerable thought to the decay of religions. "Simplistic systems are short-lived." They must combine antagonism of thought in order not to be one-sided. Yet he thinks what the Greek civilization needed was to be "bound together by the worship of one Supreme God." (But this did not avert the ruin of the Jewish nation. Chancellor Hoyt once said that the Greek civilization might have been saved if it had only had common schools.) There were some splendid products of Roman and Greek life—men of the highest character, as among the Stoics. "The morality of the Roman, like that of the English, belonged to the cycle of justice; the Greek morality to the cycle of kindness, mercy and sympathy." Of Socrates, it is affirmed that "His religion was moral culture." Another writer has told us that "no treatise has been printed in England in the present century of so great theological merit as that of Pagan Cicero on the Nature of the Gods, or the preface to his Treatise of Laws. The work of Aristotle, we are told, is still the text-book of morals at the first university of Christian England."

Many persons will be interested in what our author says of pre-existence and transmigration—which he thinks "must rest on some reasonable foundation." He speaks of the probabilities that animals have souls. "Animals can think, feel, will remember, imagine, reason, love, just as man does." Many traits of man liken him to animals. Once walking in the British Museum, Dr. Clarke says, "In the room of the Radiata I imagined the soul to have once inhabited a star-fish, and by stretching out in every direction to have learned the existence of an outward world. As a mollusk rolled up in a shell I supposed the soul occupied in digesting these experiences and becoming acquainted with itself. As a fish, the soul learned the joy of easy motion, supported on all sides by the buoyant but yielding element. Alacrity, vivacity, the energy to act is developed in some forms of insect life. In bivalves the soul may have learned how to grasp and hold. The crocodile, all mouth, gives us the devouring element, that rapacity, that irresistible appetite which may have anything and all things for its object. Who knows but that the insatiate appetite for knowledge in a Casaubon or Scaliger may have been cultivated when, in some previous state of existence, they roamed about as sharks." The doctrine of pre-existence has been very generally held—a majority of the human race still believing in it. And Dr. Clarke thinks some doctrine of "the evolution of the soul" based on pre-existence and transmigration would greatly help out Darwin's theory of natural selection and the survival of the fittest. "Thus science and philosophy will

*Ten Great Religions. Part II. A Comparison of All Religions. By Jas. Freeman Clarke. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 1883. \$3.00.

co-operate, nor will poetry hesitate to lend her aid"—and he quotes from Wordsworth, whom he calls "the religious poet of our century," and Tennyson, and adds, "It would be curious if we should find science and philosophy taking up again this old theory of metempsychosis, remodelling it to suit our present modes of religious and scientific thought and launching it again on the wide ocean of human belief. But strange things have happened in the history of human opinion."

He is very glad to find that now the "best Buddhist scholars" favor views which he put forth in 1868. Then he "ventured to deny" (with Bunsen and Mr. Alger) "that the highest object of desire in Buddhism is to obtain Nirvana, or annihilation." He thinks Nirvana means a bliss attainable in this life. "It probably means what Christianity means by the rest of the soul hereafter in God; what Jesus meant when he said 'Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you.'" "The Buddhists, like the rest of mankind, believe in a personal ego, and a continued existence hereafter." The Buddhists also believe in a personal God, for they practice worship. "If Buddhism is without a God, how can it have prayers?" This is consistent with the statement in Part I that "the God of Buddhism is the Buddha himself, the deified man, who has become an infinite being by entering Nirvana." (p. 160.)

As we have suggested, most thoughtful readers will find great questions here too summarily dismissed, and if part is compared with part, no little confusion. There seems a playing fast and loose with systems to verify a theory or make out a lecture—much more of the preacher than of the scholar. Dr. Clarke is an allegorist, using old words with new or expanded meanings, or cutting down the limits of familiar terms to sharpen or simplify a distinction. "We all have our fetiches," he says; any relic to which we attach more than its real worth. A signature of Shakspeare; a nail from the prison in Virginia, on which John Brown hung his hat; the bone of a dead saint, given by the Pope to an emperor, or the crocodile of the Egyptian worship, are all classed together. Christianity seems to be made synonymous with all wisdom and goodness; and even with material progress, strong nationalities, and civilization. "The inhabitants of the little island of England, possessing incredible wealth, are able to keep possession of vast continents and to master populations ten times more numerous than their own." "Where are the chief manufactures and commerce of the world? In Christendom." Good government, order, freedom, liberty and law seem "strictly coextensive with the faith of Christ and the knowledge of the Christian Scriptures." Yet Christianity is defined as that which has been received by *all Christians*, always, and in all places. "All that is essential in Christianity was in Jesus." Yet Christianity will probably continue to change, "developing more and more into the character of which the life of Jesus is the type." The book concludes with a chapter

on the future religion of mankind and considers that there are three possible churches—one founded upon a ritual or priesthood and form of worship; or on a creed, or system of belief; or lastly on a personal prophet. He thinks the religion of the future will organize about a person, and that person Jesus.

Our Unity Pulpit.

A HARVEST HOMILY.

PREACHED BEFORE THE CHANNING MEMORIAL CHURCH OF NEW-PORT, R. I., SEPT. 30, 1883, BY CHAS. W. WENDTE, MINISTER OF THE SOCIETY.

Once more the summer is ended and autumn has nearly run its course. Passed away are the long, bright days which summoned the husbandman to work while it was yet day, and the warm sunshine which co-operated with his toil. Once more our young nation has plowed and planted in faith and now reaps in joy the rich return of the harvest. All over the land rises the glad and thankful Harvest Home of our people as they gather into their bins and barns the goodly fruits of the field, the precious products of garden and orchard and farm. We look back to-day upon a season richly blest with growth and fruition. In spite of the droughts and frosts which for a time threatened the crops, the final outcome of the year's agriculture is quite equal to that of previous seasons. Grass has grown abundantly for cattle, and herb for the service of man, while the plenteous yield of cereals not only suffices for the needs of our own people, but assures a large overplus to feed the hungry millions of the Old World. This abundance which crowns the labors of the year is the gladsome promise of cheaper food and plentier, and a general increase of comfort and happiness among us. It assures the integrity of our family life, the stability of the social order, the continued advance of our young nation in culture and piety.

Surely when such rich blessings are heaped upon our people and they are made newly and deeply conscious of the bountiful provision of the All Father, it cannot content them to selfishly and sullenly take the mercies of Heaven and make no return of acknowledgment and praise. No merely sensuous enjoyment of commodities and comforts should render us unmindful of their higher interpretation and use, or forgetful of Him who is the Divine Source of all our good. In what way, then, can we most appropriately celebrate the Harvest bounty, and reap the highest rewards for our individual and social salvation? The obvious and fitting duties of the hour, the best and devoutest return we can make for the fruitful year is, first of all, *that we rejoice in it*. Joy should be the prevailing sentiment of this auspicious season. For what is the Harvest bounty but the providential answer to that petition most frequently uttered of all our prayers, most instant and near to man—"give us this day our daily

bread." This daily bread by which we live, the material basis of all our higher energies, bodily and mental, is now assured. The overflowing harvest means enough bread to eat and raiment to put on, shortened hours of labor and enlarged leisure for enjoyment and self-culture; it enables us to give a better education to the children in our homes, to make those homes more comfortable and refined, and to achieve a higher standard of social culture. In these benefits every member of the community has a share.

All alike are blest in the Harvest Bounty, and have abundant reason to rejoice. As the golden tide of cereals flows across the country the wheels of commerce and industry revolve more swiftly, idle hands grow busy and eager, private pockets and public treasuries are filled, poverty disappears, care flies from the heart, activity and cheerfulness prevail, social discontent and strife are transformed into happiness and peace.

If ever this strain of rejoicing arose with fitness from a favored nation it does from our American people. We are essentially an agricultural nation and on our harvests depends our prosperity and welfare. We hardly appreciate this at its full value, especially in our cities, in whose attention the interests of trade and manufacture and the various arts and professions are uppermost. A single glance, however, at the statistics of American industry informs us to better purpose. According to the last national census the number of persons in the United States engaged directly in agricultural pursuits was 7,670,493, out of a total of 17,392,099 workers. Add to this the number of persons employed in handling, storing, transporting and distributing the crops, and we shall find that more than half of our population is immediately occupied with the products of the soil; whereas in England only about one-fifth of the workers are agriculturists. The true wealth of our country, the chief guaranty of its continued prosperity and peace, lie in the products of its soil. We vaunt perhaps the hoard of precious metals yielded by our Pacific slope, but the value of the cereal crop of two great states like Illinois and Iowa exceeds in value in any recent year the output of our mines. A richer treasure lies in the gold the sunshine ripens above the ground than in that which is stored beneath it. The products of the mine, too, are subject to a hundred contingencies, but the great forces of nature lodged in soil and sunshine, dew and rain, never fail us. Year in and year out they co-operate with man's toil and provident care. Seed time and harvest succeed each other, as day follows night, while in living characters God writes his law of evolution over all our fields: "first the blade and then the ear, and then the full corn in the ear."

We are, then, essentially an agricultural people and destined to grow more so as the centuries roll on. This should be an additional cause for rejoicing, for the cultivation of the soil is the most manly and honest of human occupations. It is the basis

of a true social order, the prophecy that our young civilization is to become great in the arts of peace and the ministries of humanity and good will. Ours is indeed a favored nation to whom is given this Eden of the New World to dress and till, to make a home of plenty for ourselves and a granary for the world beside.

A second obligation resting upon us who are the glad recipients of the Harvest bounty is *that we be thankful for it*. Thankful first of all to those faithful, toiling workers in field and vineyard and orchard, to whose industry and foresight we so largely owe the rich returns of this hour. On the loyalty and diligence of the American farmer our whole civilization ultimately depends. His integrity and toil are the corner-stones of our national edifice. Honor and thanks, therefore, to our brothers and sisters who plowed and planted and reaped, and patiently bore the heat and burden of the day, that we might rejoice in abundance of food and look forward confidently to another prosperous year!

Yet not these alone or chiefly should receive our grateful acknowledgment. The husbandman's toil does not suffice to assure the harvest. Though he plant and water, it is God who giveth the increase. The dwellers in cities and towns, mostly following avocations remote from the agricultural interest and less immediately dependent for their success on the great forces lodged in earth and sunshine and rainfall, are prone to forget this. They attribute their success or failure in their undertakings to themselves or the social order of which they are a part, and so they grow unmindful of that Almighty Power and Godhead which, however unrecognized and unacknowledged, ever makes perfect our human weakness in its divine strength, and is our one sure ground of confidence and hope.

But the farmer is less subject to this form of impiety—forgetfulness of God. His vocation brings him closer to the Infinite Power and makes him more conscious of dependence on the Providence, more glad and thankful for the co-operating favor of the Almighty. He best of all understands that deep parable of Jesus: "The kingdom of God is as if a man should cast seed into the ground and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself, first the blade, and then the ear, and then the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle because the harvest is come." Of a truth, the farmer knoweth not how it all came about. He only prepared the ground, and put in the seed, but the earth *of itself* bringeth forth the fruit—the divine forces working in soil and sunshine, dews and rains, genial air and protecting snow can alone establish the work of his hands and assure the reward of his faithfulness. Therefore as the farmer in these autumn days looks down on the foodful treasures gleaned from his well-tilled acres, how natural and comely for him also to look up to heaven with thankfulness, and praise that

beneficent hand which is stretched in blessing over his field and garden.

And not less appropriate and comely is it for the dwellers in towns and cities, whose life-work is performed less immediately in the consciousness of the divine help, to utter their gratitude to the Lord of the harvest. To be commended is that increasing custom in our churches which sets apart a Sunday at this season and keeps it as a solemn feast of thanksgiving. For what is religion but the transfiguration of the earthly interests of man in the light of God's divine intent and tender care. And what higher ministry can the church fulfil than to give an ideal interpretation to these great occasions in the course of nature and the life of man, making him newly and deeply conscious through service and sermon of that Eternal Love which crowns the year with its goodness. Let our grateful people therefore repair with exaltation of spirit to their temples. Let their altars be decorated with the flowers and fruits of earth, the glowing foliage of autumn, the foodful gleanings of the harvest-field—the beautiful symbols and reminders of the divine bounty. Let their voices and hearts blend in venerable scriptures in which the harvest gladness of ancient nations found devout utterance; let their songs sound forth the thankful joy of a united, free and happy people, richly endowed with the gifts of a beneficent nature; their prayers rise in grateful adoration to him who satisfieth the desire of every living thing and whose goodness is over all his works.

Yet here and there, it may be, a voice is heard which does not blend with this prevailing and happy song, the sad, complaining voice of a human spirit which brooding over its private griefs and wrongs, cannot lift itself to the general joy. It sits apart in the shadow with hard, accusing thoughts of the providence. It lies prone with disappointment and affliction. In bitterness it cries—"I have no cause to rejoice or give thanks. Let me rather pray for deliverance from my troubles and the evils which compass me about!" But how mistaken, how selfish and ungrateful is this! Nothing to be grateful for? For you the universal order keeps its unbroken course, for you the sun shines and the dews fall, for you the flowers spring and the harvests ripen; to assure you and yours the daily bread which is your first and most urgent requirement all this miracle of growth and fruition, this loveliness of summer field and wood, this glory of the cornfields, this joyous harvest home! And if this were all you received from it, should it not be enough to make you break forth in joy and singing? But it is not all. Not only the satisfaction of the senses and your bodily well being spring from it—it assures the integrity of your family life and makes possible your business success; the stability of the social order, the progress of man, the triumph of the true and the good are involved in it. Be thankful and glad therefore. Rise from your own concerns to the level of the general joy. Unite with

your brethren in the congratulation and cheer of this festival season. Learn to forget your own private and personal discontent in a grateful acknowledgment of God's bounty to you and to all; your life brighter with trust and holier with praise.

And this brings us to the last and crowning obligation involved in the harvest bounty—that *we strive to become worthy of it*. We are not to be content with a merely sensuous enjoyment of the material goods we have received, or a merely formal celebration of the Divine bounty. The best, the devoutest return to God for his mercies is a regenerated heart and unselfish, kindly life. This caution is a timely one. Men are all too apt in prosperity to fall into the ignoble frame of mind which Jesus portrayed in the parable of the foolish rich man: "My soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years. Take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry." Alas! that would be a poor return for the goodness of God, to make it only an instrument to our idle, selfish and wicked career, or, like the slothful servant, to hide our talent where it cannot be of any possible use to ourselves or benefit to our fellows.

Rather should we use the gifts of God in building ourselves up in health and virtue and in making our family life more beautiful and tender, thus transforming the temporal goods of earth into the spiritual treasure of knowledge, virtue and faith; a treasure which never corrupts, and can never be taken from us. Above all we should remember in the midst of our harvest plenty, the poor and needy of earth, made such, not because there is not abundant provision for all, but because they are weak and blind, and we selfish and unmindful. Whatever we do unto the least of these, runs the Scripture, we do unto God, and it impressively asks us "If a man love not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" To feed the hungry, clothe the naked and shelter the homeless—this is to show ourselves worthy of God's blessings, and keep a true harvest home.

"Not long prayers, but earnest zeal—
This is what is wanted more;
To put the shoulder to the wheel,
And bread unto the hungry deal
From the store.

"Not high-sounding notes of praise,
Ringing through the vaulted dome;
But that we the fallen raise,
Bring the poor from life's highways
To the home.

"Worship God by doing good;
Help the suffering in their needs.
He who loves God as he should,
Makes his heart's love understood
By his deeds."

And now, lastly, how it lifts and helps us in striving for this good life to know that that which we thus recognize to be the immediate duty of each, in the providence of God, is destined to become the mission of all our people.

Our world-mission as a nation is one of peace and help to all the world. Already Great Britain, Germany, France and Scandinavia have felt the blessing of our plenty overflowing their garner. In 1880, half a million tons of meat, and between six and seven million tons of grain were shipped by us to Great Britain alone. The American farmer has made food cheaper in England than ever it was before, while by his competition he is bringing to pass a peaceful and far-reaching revolution in the industrial and social condition of that country. Yet great as are our harvests they are small when compared with what they will be when the whole of our vast domain is brought under cultivation. Immense tracts of territory once thought to be doomed to eternal sterility, have been found to possess the physical constituents that will make them bloom into beauty and fertility when touched by the intelligent labor of the husbandman. A splendid tier of states at the Northwest is now inviting settlement and tillage—Nebraska, Dakota (a territory four times as large nearly as Ohio), Montana, more than twice as big as all New England, Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, Idaho and others, together with the fertile regions to the north in British America, all destined to be the home of millions of happy people and a huge granary to the modern world.

The imagination grows bewildered as one contemplates the future greatness and wealth of our country, East and West, North and South. The part assigned it by Divine Providence in the settlement of the globe and the development of human society is unequaled in grandeur by anything which has yet occurred in the history of the race. God grant that we may be worthy of our world-mission, and grow in moral insight and enlightened piety as well as in numbers and wealth and power. That this may be so it will be necessary for our young nation to remember always that the true riches of a people lie not in the material wealth that crowds its barns and fills its coffers, but in the crop of noble men and women it rears in its homes, and who are the true harvests of its social and political life. The highest function of a nation, the most exalted benefit it can confer upon the race, is surely not the production of enormous crops of grain. It consists in presenting the world with illustrious human lives, grand types of character, intellectual, moral, affectional, religious. The time is approaching when we shall boast more than of the ship-loads of food we send abroad—the raw material of civilization—of the great thinkers, poets and artists, philanthropists and reformers, the seers and saints whom our free institutions have produced, and whose light goes out unto the ends of the earth.

We can point with pride and joy to at least the first fruits of our young society—to Washington and Franklin, Channing and Emerson, Garrison and Lincoln, Sumner, Longfellow and their noble associates. What is all the produce of our fields compared with this rich human harvest of our

century! It matters little whether the yield of corn or wheat multiplies a little more or less rapidly, or the vast plains of the West and South wait a century longer for their development. But it does matter—it is of the first importance indeed, that our American manhood and womanhood shall ripen perfectly and richly, that a free and intelligent, a happy and God-fearing people shall make these hills and valleys vocal with the joyful song of their labor and their thanksgiving for the blessing of God which crowns it.

Because of this double harvest—the harvest which feeds our bodies and the finer fruitage of intellect and character and faith among us—our people to-day rejoice and give thanks, and dedicate themselves anew to the ideals of duty and the brotherhood of man.

Notes from the Field.

THE CHURCH FAIR.—The time of the "Oyster Supper" has come, and the voice of the woman selling aprons is again heard in our churches. We have intelligence of several successful (!) novelties in the shape of "Flag Festivals," "Cake Fairs," "Turk Parties," and other "activities of the Women's Sewing Society;" but we crucify our editorial relish for a good item of news, and suppress the particulars, lest others might be tempted to "go and do likewise." We prize too highly the moral dignity of our churches, and respect too tenderly the hopeful disinterestedness and spiritual zeal of our women, to encourage these activities that do help church finances at the cost of woman's nerves.

BOULDER, COL.—Mr. Van Ness's movement in this city starts off with an *eclat* that is almost alarming. The first audience was one hundred and fifty strong, among which there was an encouraging array of the business and professional men of the town. The Advent church has been engaged for the year and the financial necessities are assured. An "Authors' Club" has been established, and a course of Sunday evening lectures on "The Religions of the World" is about to be inaugurated. Mr. Van Ness is greatly impressed with the possibilities of the "Colorado Field." He writes enthusiastically of the opportunities. He says: "The right kind of young men at Pueblo and Cheyenne could build splendid societies;" of which we have not the slightest doubt; but let the young men who may be stirred by this item with the desire to try, look well to the adjective. They must needs have their wisdom and zeal nobly tempered with patience and persistence, else their going to Colorado in the interests of salvation, may end in damnation to the cause and starvation to themselves. The interests of the religion of character and culture in Colorado call for men of hero and it may be martyr stuff.

NEWPORT, R. I.—The Channing Memorial Church celebrated its annual festival of Thanksgiving for the Harvest on Sunday, Sept. 30th, 1883, with a special musical and liturgical service. The sanctuary was richly and appropriately decorated with autumn flowers and leaves, grains and grasses, vegetables and fruits, and other symbols and reminders of the bounty of Nature and the goodness of Nature's God.

High up in the pulpit arch, and beneath the beautiful Channing window representing the New Testament parable of the Sower, was placed a plow, tastefully wreathed with autumn leaves and framed with a huge arch of green Box intertwined with red hawberries, and crowned with a sickle in Golden Rod. The screen beneath was festooned with yellow ears of corn, and displayed the rake, scythe and other implements of husbandry. To the left of the pulpit—which was almost hidden from sight by a wealth of autumn flowers—was a pyramid of vegetables of every imaginable kind, ten feet in height and glowing with color. To the left was shown the communion table set with its shining silver and the symbolic bread and wine. The snowy cloth was gracefully festooned with the vine and clusters of the grape and sprays of wheat. The altar steps were covered with plants and flowers. The marble font in front of and below the pulpit was heaped high with delicious fruit, while two large cornucopias beside it overflowed with the treasures of garden and orchard. The organ front was adorned with large designs in various colored grasses, the stone pillars supporting the transept roof were encircled with giant corn-stalks displaying their ripened ears, a crown made of autumn leaves was seen over the door leading to the vestry—in short, wherever the eye rested it was delighted with color, graceful design and symbolic significance. The children of the parish occupied the front pews and participated in the printed order of service, consisting of prayers, responses, carols and scriptures. Among the worshipers who crowded the church was Babu Protap Chunder Mozoomdar, the eloquent Hindu and apostle of the Bramo-Somaj, who conducted the evening service and made felicitous allusion to the Harvest feasts of his own country. The discourse of the pastor is printed in this issue of UNITY.

The Study Table.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

EMERSON'S COMPLETE WORKS. Volume VII.—SOCIETY AND SOLITUDE; Volume VIII.—LETTERS AND SOCIAL AIMS. Riverside Edition. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. Price per volume, \$1.75.

MAN A CREATIVE FIRST CAUSE. Two Discourses Delivered at Concord, Mass., July, 1882, by Rowland G. Hazard, LL.D. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. \$0.75.

CICERO DE OFFICIIS. Translated with an Introduction and Notes by Andrew P. Peabody. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 12mo. pp. xxiv., 254.

SERMONS. By Professor David Swing, Chicago: Jansen, McClurg & Co. 12mo. pp. 307. Price \$1.50.

SPEECH AND MANNERS, FOR HOME AND SCHOOL. By Miss E. S. Kirkland. Chicago: Jansen, McClurg & Co. pp. 263. Price \$1.00.

THE PURITAN CONSPIRACY against the Pilgrim Fathers and the Congregational Church, 1624. By John A. Goodwin. Boston: Cupples, Upham & Co. 1883. Pph. pp. 20.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S LIFE OF GEORGE WASHINGTON. By William M. Thayer. New York: John B. Alden. 1883. pp. 466.

Mr. Thayer has given a history that will be read with interest and profit by boys and girls from ten to sixteen years of age. But little previous knowledge of history is required in order to understand the story, as the author adheres closely to his subject, and treats but slightly the public events with which George Washington was associated.

The book is written chiefly in the colloquial style; the different characters speaking for themselves. So long as the reader is conscious of this, it seems a little stilted and unnatural, but as he becomes interested he does not notice it; so, on the whole, the method is quite a success. The author is rather credulous in regard to remarkable stories about his hero, and frequently attaches great importance

to what, in other boys, would be taken as a matter of course. He also seems to favor the notion of a Providence that occasionally intervened in Washington's special welfare, though he seldom commits himself on that point.

The early life of Washington receives more than usual attention: the author shows how the virtues which characterized the hero in later life were the "outcome of a life well begun." The incidents of his campaigns are given in a clear, vivid manner, and the boy who reads will readily imagine himself on a "white charger" in the midst of the battle. The work is appropriately closed with the Farewell Address and a eulogy by Gen. Henry Lee. The book should find its way into the hands of thousands of our young people, that they may thereby become familiar with the character of "the greatest of good men and the best of great men."

C. H. E.

Conferences.

KANSAS LIBERAL UNION.

The fifth annual meeting of the State Association of Liberals was held in Forest Park, Ottawa, Kansas, October 6th and 7th. A little less than two weeks' notice brought together a larger company of earnest workers in the Liberal cause than was expected. Many things conspired to make it impossible for the Executive Committee of the Union to make the usual and necessary preparation for holding the annual meeting, and when finally the date was fixed and the call issued, it was expected that the chief reason for convening would be the transaction of business and the making of arrangements for holding the meeting next year, together with certain other work of local interest. In addition to the thorough and excellent attention to the business details there were some fine addresses, some very earnest, wholesome and inspiring conference talk, and a most enjoyable time socially.

An interesting feature of the meeting was a debate between a Christian minister and Mr. C. B. Hoffman, which was conducted in so dignified and kindly a manner as to be productive of real good. Unlike the customary debate where the "strife is for triumph more than truth," there was an utter absence of disposition to take advantage or to distort or over-color statements made on either side of the question.

The minister disclaimed all understanding of the doctrine of the atonement, denounced the doctrine that men could spend their days in infamy and end this life in a leap to glory, and rested his case upon the merits, not of Jesus' blood, but of Jesus' life, its value as a model and its saving influence upon men. With an orthodoxy so transfigured by Liberalism, the stock arguments and hot shot of Liberalism would have been of no avail. Happily Mr. Hoffman was fully equal to the situation and met with reasoning well known to UNITY the inconsistencies of the last refuge of orthodox theology.

Mr. C. B. Hoffman gave a fine presentation of the land and labor problems as set forth by Henry George.

The Sunday forenoon address by Dr. Castleman was a clear and inspiring setting forth of the effect of free thought along the various lines of human growth and action.

Mrs. L. L. Hilliker read an excellent essay, and several others spoke acceptably.

The next annual meeting will be held late in July or early in August of next summer, in Forest Park, Ottawa, and will hold ten days. Systematic work will be carried on during the year to make the meeting largely successful. A two days' meeting of the K. L. U. will be held in Enterprise, Kansas, some time in January.

The following named persons were elected officers of the Union for the coming year:

C. B. Hoffman, President. Mrs. L. L. Hilliker, Treasurer. Annie L. Diggs, Secretary. W. W. Fraser, Alfred Taylor, J. T. Haughey, V. P. Wilson, Sarah A. Brown, J. E. Sutton, members of the Executive Committee.

ANNIE L. DIGGS.

Little Unity.

ELLEN T. LEONARD, Editor, Hyde Park, Ill.

Associate Editors.

MISS CORA H. CLARKE, Jamaica Plain, Mass.

MRS. E. E. MAREAN, 3619 Ellis Ave., Chicago.

It is the object of these columns to increase the interest of the young reader in finding "What to see" in this wonderful world about us, and in deciding "What to do" toward the making of a true and useful life. Also to help mothers, Sunday-school Teachers, and all who have the privilege of training children to find the soul of all life in the things which are to be seen and to be done around us.

IN THE FACTORIES.

I wonder if you ever have a chance to go into factories of any kind. If you do have such a chance, do not let it slip by, for you can hardly realize how interesting it will be to you until you have tried it, nor how much you will carry away with you in your memory, which will stay by you and come up often and often as you grow older, in explanation of things you could not so fully have understood had you not seen the workings of the factories.

How well I remember the cotton mills, and gingham mills, of my native town, and the wonderful sense of power and accuracy, and mechanism which filled me as I watched the great wheels do their work; and following the different stages of the cotton from the raw material, finally saw the long white strips of cloth measured off into bolts or webs, or sent for bleaching. * * * *

One gathers, from seeing all this, something of a realizing sense of what a great amount of labor, time and thought it takes to make the common cotton cloth we buy so cheap. And then how about other things which you use so freely? Do you know where they come from, or anything how they are made? There is a wonderfully interesting history lies behind everything you have; the clothes you wear; the pens, pencils and books you use at school; the shoes you travel through so fast. Everything you touch has had a long, slow process to go through before it was fit for use. Find out about it as much as you can. You will like it better than story books, however good they may be. * * *

If you want to know how paper is made and cannot go to the place and see for yourself, you can do the next best thing by reading an account of a visit there, in the July number of the *Wide Awake*. It is told in such a lively and entertaining manner that you get nearly as much benefit as you would in going for yourself, and much less noise and dirt. But I should still advise you to go yourself if you could.

We have a new Sunday School Lesson Manual just prepared by Rev. W. C. Gannett, which comes as No. XIV. of the UNITY series. It is not only "Lessons;" it is something delightful to read in itself, and all our young folks will like to know those things which it tells them, whether they take them as lessons or not. There are twelve pages in

all, of which the last four and a half are the Hints for Class Talks.

We know of nothing which has ever been given us, in the way of talks about Christmas and the wonder stories connected with the birth of Jesus, so full of reverent good sense as this. Before Christmas comes this year—before you get deep in the interests of whatever good time is planning for the day itself, just think for a moment, "what does it all mean?" What is Christmas to you, *besides* a beautiful day of merry-making? *Why* is it *that*? What touches the hearts of all the people of the land with love and good will, at this particular time? If you read this little book to find out more of the real beauty of the Christmas-time, it will deepen your love for, and understanding of, this joyful festival season.

THE LITTLE BIRD.

A little bird with feathers brown
Sat singing on a tree;
The song was very soft and low,
But sweet as it could be.

And all the people passing by
Looked up to see the bird
That made the sweetest melody
That ever they had heard.

But all the bright eyes looked in vain,
For birdie was so small,
And with a modest dark-brown coat
He made no show at all.

"Why, papa," little Gracie said,
"Where can this birdie be?
If I could sing a song like that
I'd sit where folks could see."

"I hope my little girl will learn
A lesson from that bird,
And try to do what good she can,
Not to be seen or heard.

"This birdie is content to sit
Unnoticed by the way,
And sweetly sing his Maker's praise
From dawn to close of day.

"So live, my child, all through your life,
That be it short or long,
Though others may forget your looks,
They'll not forget your song,"

—Scattered Seeds.

In Pompeii the workmen discovered in the hardened mud of new excavations, two empty spaces left by decayed and vanished bodies. The spaces having been filled as a mould would be with plaster, as is the usual practice, the figure of a woman with her arms outstretched to a little boy were brought to light.

The child was just beyond her reach, but as the fiery flood flowed in upon her, she had held out her arms to save him—in vain. Eighteen centuries have passed since then. Every atom of the woman's form has passed from sight. Yet there is the mother's love, immortal still.

INEXPENSIVE PETS.

C. H. C.

Last winter I heard a lecturer on botany advise his audience to keep earthworms as pets in the house, stating that their habits would be found very interesting to watch, almost as much so as those of canary-birds. The worms must be kept in pots or boxes of earth, of sufficient size to make them comfortable and allow them space to perform their nightly gymnastics. For earth-worms are nocturnal animals, and during the day they usually lie quietly in their burrows, the mouths of which are plugged up with leaves or sticks, or protected with a little heap of stones.

At night it is interesting to watch them dragging the leaves about, and to notice what kind of leaves they select, and which end they take hold of. They are said to drag the leaves into their burrows by their tips, although to us the leaf-stalk might seem to offer a more convenient handle.

Besides serving as food, and as a front door, the leaves are also used as wall-paper by the worms, which line the upper parts of their burrows with them, probably liking the feeling of the leaves next their skin better than that of the particles of earth.

The earth-worm is by no means a homely animal, for its skin shines with beautiful rainbow hues. The body consists of from one hundred to two hundred segments, each of which is furnished with bristles, which serve as feet, as by their aid, the earth-worm can crawl backward as well as forward. This adds to the difficulty of knowing which end is the head, but it will be found that the head end tapers to a blunt point and has the largest rings. The mouth is furnished with a lip capable of seizing hold of objects, and carrying them about.

Although earth-worms are land animals, they have been known to live many days under water, while they have been killed in a single night by exposure to the dry air of a dwelling room. Mr. Darwin used to keep their pots covered with panes of glass.

They are quite deaf, and have no eyes, but are rather sensitive to light, provided it fall upon the front end of the body. Mr. Darwin found that if, in the evening, the pots where he kept his worms were illuminated before they had left their burrows, they failed to appear, although if they were once out, they could usually be watched for some time with a lantern or candle, without seeming to notice it, especially if they were occupied in eating leaves or dragging them to their burrows.

THE LITTLE VISITORS.

J. J.

"Oh! children, see what I have found," said Mrs. Hammond one day.

"What, what," cried the children.

"Sit still and I will show you." She raised a glass globe from the paper on which it rested, and out came—two beautiful butterflies.

"Oh! was that what was in the bed the caterpillar made," said Phil.

"Yes," said Angie, "for see, it left the bed behind it empty."

"Mrs. Hammond," said Jamie, "please let us see the caterpillar that has not made its bed yet."

"Wait a moment, Jamie, till I get the glass of flowers for the butterflies to rest on. There is some sweet alyssum among the others, and I think the butterflies will like to make some honey from it."

They brought the flowers, and gently raising the butterflies one after the other, she placed them on the flowers where they rested contentedly. Then she brought the box in which the caterpillar was feeding.

"See," said Christal, "the yellow on the caterpillar has turned into orange on the butterfly's wings."

"Yes," said Walter, "and see where the black is—all round the edge with white spots on it. Oh, how pretty!"

"Now, Mrs. Hammond," said Angie, "may we look at the bed again? How white and pure it now that it is empty. All the spots are gone."

Maurice, who had till then been absorbed in watching the butterflies, looked up and said soberly: "Why, Mrs. Hammond, how strange it seems that that beautiful butterfly should have been shut up in the caterpillar's skin. Its wings must have been folded up very close."

"Yes, Maurice, but remember its wings were not grown then. And now, what shall we do with our pretty visitors?"

"Keep them," said Maurice, "so that we may watch them and see what they will do."

"No," said Angie, pitifully, "let them fly, please. See, that one is all rested, and is trying to get out."

"Yes," said Phil, "I guess we wouldn't like to be shut up in the house when we wanted to be out doors."

The other children agreed to this, the window was opened and the butterfly flew out to the flowers without waiting to say good-by. The other waited longer; then it too flew away, and little Angie, that afternoon, pointed out to her mamma, in their garden, a butterfly which, she said, was one of those they set free, which had come to say "thank you."

Men who have little business are great talkers; the more one thinks the less one speaks.—*Montesquieu*.

Announcements.

SPECIAL OFFER.

To any one not now a subscriber to **UNITY**, who sends us \$1.50 during the months of November and December, we will send the paper **FREE** to January 1st, 1884, and for a full year from that date.

THE JANSON RELIEF FUND.

The following contributions to the fund for the relief of Kristofer Janson's mission have been received at this office up to date:
Previously acknowledged.....\$377.40
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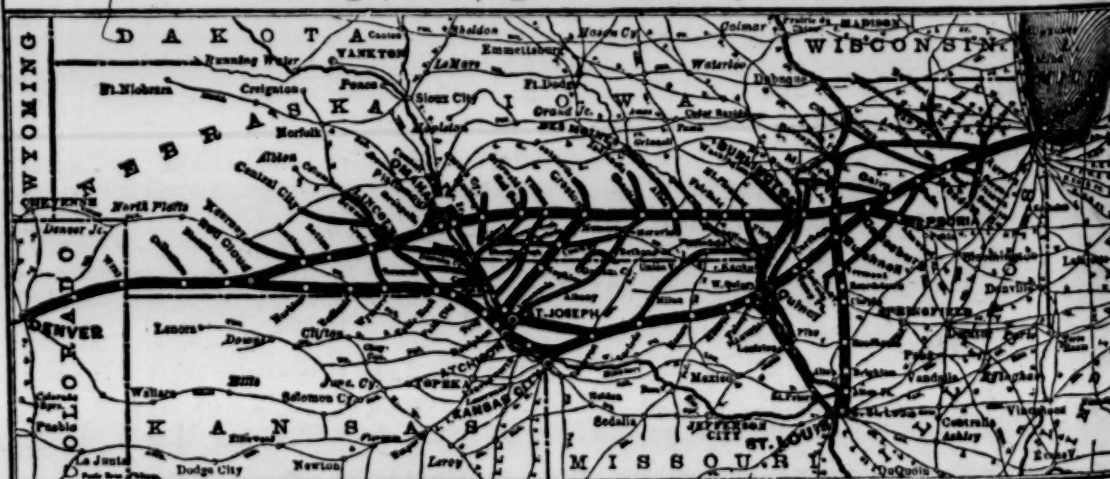
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